



REPORT

ON

**THE WORKING OF THE APPLIED NUTRITION
PROGRAMME IN ANDHRA PRADESH**

**ISSUED BY
THE EVALUATION WING OF
FINANCE AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
HYDERABAD**

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EVALUATION STUDY No. 55

STUDY ON THE WORKING OF THE APPLIED
NUTRITION PROGRAMME IN
ANDHRA PRADESH



FINANCE & PLANNING (PLG. WING)
DEPARTMENT

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1. On a suggestion made by the Employment and Social Welfare Department, a study on the implementation of the scheme of Applied Nutrition Programme was undertaken with the following broad objectives by the Evaluation Unit of the Finance and Planning (Planning Wing) Department.

2. Objectives:

- (i) To examine the criteria followed for selection of villages in the selected blocks;
- (ii) To review the programme implemented in the various villages of the selected blocks;
- (iii) To estimate the expenditure incurred on the programme;
- (iv) To study the training schemes under the Applied Nutrition Programme;
- (v) To inspect the maintenance of records and registers under the Applied Nutrition Programme; and
- (vi) To find out the administrative arrangements at the Samithi, District and State level.

3. The scheme has so far been implemented in 70 Panchayat Samithis out of the 321 Samithis in the State. Out of these 70 Panchayat Samithis covered by the Applied Nutrition Programme, 6 were selected for the study and they were Mandavalli, in Krishna District, Buttayagudem in West Godavari District of the Coastal region, Thamballapalli in Chittoor District of the Rayalaseema region and Narasapur in Medak District, Manthani in Karimnagar district and Suryapet in Nalgonda district in the Telangana region. Of the 6 Blocks, 2 Samithis have completed their prescribed period of operation and they are Manthani in Karimnagar District and Suryapet in Nalgonda District. The observations contained in the following lines are based on the information collected both by way of the questionnaire issued and returned by the Samithis, information collected personally and the results of the discussions held with the officers at all levels by the Deputy Director and his staff who handled this study.

Selection of villages:

4. The first stage after selecting the Samithis for implementation of the programme is the selection of 10 villages for the implementation

of the Applied Nutrition Programme. The Manual of operation of Applied Nutrition Programme (Subsidiary plan of operation No. 17, Andhra Pradesh) has laid down the following criteria for the selection of villages under the Applied Nutrition Programme:

- (i) Existence of a spirit of enthusiasm and co-operation on the part of the village community and especially of the village leaders;
- (ii) Existence of, or good possibility of, developing Mahila Mandal, the members of which would wish to take up such activities as vegetable and fruit cultivation, poultry keeping and assisting in the organisation of educational feeding scheme as approved by the State Government and participation in demonstration of improved diets and methods of meal preparation;
- (iii) Possibility of securing suitable land with provision of irrigational facilities in the vicinity of the village schools; and
- (iv) Possibility of establishing inland fish culture on a practical and economic basis.

5. Though the information furnished by the Samithis indicate that all these criteria have been followed in the selection of villages, it is observed that the principal criteria that appear to have weighed with the Samithis for selection of villages is the availability of suitable land, more generally, availability of land for the intended school gardens. In all the villages selected for the programme, Mahila Mandals did exist with varying degrees of activity ranging from totally inactive Mandals to occasionally alert Mandals. The conclusion of the study was that none of the villages could claim to have had a Mahila Mandal or Youth Organisation active enough for the success of the programme nor could they claim availability of local leadership of the right type and quality. These factors which were important for the success of the programme in the selected villages were simply taken for granted and assumed at the Block level in their anxiety to locate a willing donor to gift one acre of land for the school garden. The conclusion therefore is that only one of the criteria prescribed for the selection of the villages for the implementation of the programme appears to have been followed.

6. According to the programme, each Samithi had to select 10 villages for implementation of the Applied Nutrition Programme. Initially, only two of the selected Samithis could select 10 villages and the rest of them made a start with a few villages only, presumably due to their failure in securing the anticipated land as donation for the school garden from co-operating donors. However, it was strange to find that with some additions, alterations etc., while 5 Samithis did manage to select 10 villages to implement the programme, in Manthant Samithi of Karimnagar District the programme was implemented

only in 5 villages. It may, therefore, be concluded that in almost all the Samithis selected for the programme, the main problem was to secure 10 villages for implementation of the programme satisfying all the criteria prescribed for their selection. Since the Samithis have been chosen by the Government for the programme some feeling did exist that favour was done to a few Samithis and there was an understandable anxiety on the part of the Samithi chiefs to convince the Government that there would not be any difficulty in selecting 10 villages satisfying all the conditions and therefore, did not bring to the notice of the Government the inherent difficulties in citing the villages for the programme. Ultimately, of course, they did face practical difficulties in securing 10 villages, which could satisfy all the criteria. Since the conditions in other samithis were not studied, it is not safe to conclude that the selection of villages could have been much better if other samithis have been chosen. Similar conditions might exist in other Samithis too since the criteria were themselves such. In all probability, the same difficulties would have been faced in selection of the right type of villages for implementation of the programme in any Samithi. One thing that could safely be assumed is that the programme floundered even at the beginning for want of the right type of villages or for want of the right conditions for the programme to succeed.

Review of the Applied Nutrition Programme in the Selected Blocks:

7. Under the programme, the major contemplated activities were—

- (a) Establishment of a garden at the Samithi level;
- (b) Establishment of a school garden in the selected village
- (c) Establishment of a Block poultry unit;
- (d) Establishment of village poultry units;
- (e) Development of fisheries in suitable inland water resources;
and
- (f) Educational feeding programme.

Samithi Level Garden:

8. According to the manual, in every selected Samithi, a garden at the Samithi level with an extent of 3 to 5 acres and adequate irrigational facilities had to be established. During the study, it was revealed that only one of the six blocks did establish a garden at the Samithi level and that was Narsapur. The Samithis, which did not have a Samithi level garden were Manthani, Suryapet, Mandavalli, Buttayagudem and Thamballapalli. The Samithi garden at Narsapur

had an extent of five acres. The Narsapur garden did have an irrigation well, but with very little water adequate for the garden. The attention paid to this garden seems to have been more symbolic than a concerted effort to maintain a Samithi level garden for the accepted objectives for developing the habit of horticulture with a view to enlarging the availability of fruits and vegetables to supplement the diet and improve the nutritional standards of the people living in the selected areas. In this garden no fruit tree was ever grown. A few vegetables were grown now and then. The yield was absolutely substandard and marginal. The purpose of this garden according to the manual "is to demonstrate improved methods of cultivation of fruit and nutritious vegetables and the use of fertilisers, pesticides and insecticides and to produce seedlings and fruit tree grafts or saplings for supply to home gardens. Some of the land may be used to demonstrate the lay out and cropping pattern recommended for home gardens of different sizes." Judged from the recorded performance of this Samithi level garden it cannot but be held that none of the purposes for which the Samithi garden was contemplated was achieved under the programme. The Samithis which have established these gardens were to be assisted with the supply of fertilizers, cash etc., for the proper development of horticulture in the gardens. But the details of aid received in respect of Narsapur Samithi are not available. An attempt was made to obtain the value of total produce from out of this garden. From the information furnished by the Samithi, it is seen that in respect of Narsapur Samithi, the Samithi garden produced vegetables worth about Rs. 139 in the year 1971-72 and vegetables worth Rs. 52 in the year 1973-74. In the years 1972-73 and 1974-75, the production was recorded as nil. It is not clear how the garden, having been used for cultivation of vegetables in the first year was left fallow in the second year, again started in the third year to be left fallow in the fourth year. The performance of this garden apart from being poor was erratic. The value of vegetables grown in a 5 acre garden land is deplorably low. By any standards the Samithi level garden was a failure in respect of Narsapur Samithi. While there has been no Samithi garden at all in 5 out of 6 Blocks selected for the study, the performance of the one single Block, where the Samithi garden has been reported to have been established, was a failure. This garden is reported to have contributed about 9 kgs., of vegetables to the feeding programme which speaks of its operational efficiency.

9. The main reasons for the poor performance or failure of the Samithi garden appear to be:

(a) Lack of adequate irrigational facilities; and

(b) Inadequate attention paid to the Samithi garden.

10. This Samithi level garden, having been established at the Headquarters where the Extension Officer (Agriculture) functions, is

a case of total neglect on the part of this functionary; the supervision appears to be totally non-existent and the interest in the programme utterly lacking. This is yet another instance of an unutilised resource for the intended purposes.

School Gardens:

11. The establishment of a school garden adjacent to the local school was a pre-requisite under the Applied Nutrition Programme. These gardens were to be set up in all the selected villages under the programme for the specific purposes of:

- (a) Education of the pupils in the principles of modern agriculture and horticulture;
- (b) Demonstration of modern agriculture and horticultural practices which should be applied also in home gardens in the village; and
- (c) Provision of nutritious vegetables and fruits which can make a useful contribution to the school lunch programme.

12. The whole idea was that the children who participated and helped in the growth of these gardens would themselves understand the need, value and utility of these vegetables and that this can become a part of their habits. The operational arrangements were to be such that children of different ages would be mixed together to form small groups, who would be allotted small equal size plots to be attended and looked after by them. School garden committees consisting of five parents of the school children together with the teacher incharge of the school garden were also to be constituted to review the progress of the garden every month. During summer months, this garden was to be incharge of the Yuvak Mandal, and if this was not possible, it was to be sown with green manure. Excepting in Thamballapalli Samithi where in all the 10 selected villages, land has been secured but no school garden was raised, in the other five Samithis, school garden were in existence in most of the villages selected under the programme. In Narsapur Samithi, all the 10 selected villages had school gardens while in Suryapet Samithi, one village did not have a school garden. In Mandavalli Samithi, as many as four villages did not have any school garden while in Buttayagudem, 3 villages did not have school gardens. In Manthani, all the five villages selected for the programme had school gardens. The extent of school gardens range from 0.50 acre to 3.36 acres and the larger extents seem to have been secured in Manthani and Narsapur Samithis, plesumably because lands were cheaper there and easy to secure from willing donors. In an area, where land values are fantastically high like Mandavalli, in almost all the villages selected, with the best of efforts, they could not secure more than a 50 cent plot for locating

the school garden. Unfortunately, in Thamballapalli Block, where they were able to secure lands roughly corresponding to the extent required, in none of the villages school gardens were raised. The Thamballapalli Samithi was in instance where lack of attention on the part of Samithi authorities and supervision by the District and other agencies, responsible for the implementation of the programme, which were wholly responsible for keeping the donated lands idle without putting them to use for the intended purposes. In fact the donors unauthorisedly resumed the donated lands and started growing their own crops. They were plain enough to confess that they did raise crops on these lands because the lands were lying fallow without being used for the purpose for which they were donated. They were agreeable to leave the land alone if the Samithi could put it to some use or other. Their only grievance was that their donation was in vain. They even volunteered to assist the Samithi authorities if they approached them, for any assistance in raising the school garden. What was lacking appeared to be an approach to the donors and the will on the part of the Samithi Chiefs to get the School garden going as envisaged under the Applied Nutrition Programme.

13. While earlier, it has been stated that the only criterion that prompted the Samithi Agencies for the selection of villages was the availability of land for raising the school garden, from the information gathered in respect of the establishment of school gardens it is seen that even this criterion does not appear to have been completely fulfilled for there were three Samithis where, in the selected villages, the school gardens were not established. In Mandavalli and Suryapet land was not available in four and one village respectively.

14. One school garden in Narsapur and all the school gardens in Mandavalli did not have irrigation facilities. In Mandavalli, however, since the school gardens are located on the tank bunds the gardens are being pot watered from the water in the tank. An attempt was made to obtain details regarding the value of vegetables grown in the school gardens and the quantities distributed to the various beneficiaries. The information obtained was totally defective. For instance, the surplus vegetables sold exceeded the quantity produced in one Block. In another block, while the production was fairly high, the actual distribution of vegetables did not justify the high production reported. In fact, no credence could be placed on the information furnished by the Samithi Agencies in respect of the operation of the school gardens. However, from the information collected it is seen that the gardens were not maintained throughout the period of operation. Some school gardens were lying fallow in some years. In some the gardens were not at all raised. All that could be mentioned is the result of the personal observation of the officers when they visited these areas for the study. It is seen that none of the school gardens was scientifically or properly managed. There was hardly

any evidence of active participation of the school children in the school garden. In many cases it was only nominal. Wherever there was any school garden worth its name, it was being managed by the watch man of the school, who is made to look after the garden. The teacher who was incharge of the programme, now and then made the children work on the school garden. If a total view has to be taken on the results of the school garden programme, it is disappointing. Not only from the point of view of actual production of vegetables, to aid the school lunch programme but also from the point of view of spreading the habit and knowledge in regard to horticulture in the student population the programme has failed. From the data collected, it is seen that there was no uniformity either in the cash assistance distributed for the maintenance of the school garden or the value of seed distributed on the value of fertilisers, etc. Different school gardens received varying quantum of assistance for the upkeep of these school gardens. The total expenditure on school gardens varied from Rs. 14,000 the lowest in Mandavalli to Rs. 95,000 the highest in Suryapet. The expenditure in Buttayagudem Narasapur and Manthani was Rs. 43,000, Rs. 31,000 and Rs. 27,000 respectively. Judged from the huge outlays on these school gardens the results were disappointing. The conclusions that emerge from the study of the maintenance of the school gardens as a part of the Applied Nutrition Programme are:

- (i) In some villages lands could not be secured for establishment of school gardens during the period of the programme;
- (ii) In villages where land has been secured, there have been instances of school gardens not having been established;
- (iii) The attention and the assistance that these school gardens received varied from village to village and there was neither uniformity nor continuity both in the attention and assistance extended to these school gardens;
- (iv) The produce from the school garden did not materially contribute to the school lunch programme;
- (v) The school gardens are in varying stages of disuse in the different villages selected for the study; and
- (vi) The school garden programme did not succeed in any one of the objectives envisaged in the programme and the impact it has made is practically insignificant.

Poultry Programme:

15. Under the Applied Nutrition Programme, it was contemplated that a poultry unit of 200 white leghorn hens and 20 R.I.R. cocks will be established in each of the selected Blocks. The poultry unit was expected to undertake the incubation and rearing of chicks on a

limited scale. It was also expected to supply chicks to village poultry units to be started by Mahila Mandals, Youth Clubs and private individuals. It was proposed that poultry units will supply table eggs after meeting the hatching requirements in the cold season and eggs produced during the summer as a contribution to approved feeding programmes. It was also expected that the poultry units will provide training to persons selected from members of the Mahila Mandal, Yuvak Mandal and Private individuals. It will, therefore, be seen that the primary function of the poultry unit is to multiply chicks for distribution to the intending poultry keepers in the Block. The unit's contribution to the educational feeding programme is only a secondary function of the Block poultry units.

16. Out of the 6 selected Blocks, the poultry programme was not at all started in Thamballapalli Block. While in Manthani Block, the unit was started even in the first year, in Narsapur, Mandavalli and Buttayagudem Blocks, they were started in the second year and in Suryapet Block, it was started in the third year. In Mandavalli and Buttayagudem Blocks, these poultry units were wound up after 2 years.

17. From the information collected from the Samithis, it is seen that none of the Blocks, where these Block poultry units were started, supplied chicks to any intending poultry keepers in the Blocks except in Manthani Block where 300 chicks were reported to have been supplied to the 3 village units placed under the care of the village teachers. It is, therefore, concluded that the Block poultry units failed in their primary objective of providing foundation stocks to the intending poultry keepers in the Block area and thereby failed in the objective of promoting poultry keeping in the Block areas to augment supply and distribution of eggs to improve the nutritional standards of the people in the area.

18. Though the distribution of eggs to the approved feeding programme is only a less important and secondary objective of the programme, the only purpose that has been served by these poultry units is in the direction of supply of eggs to the feeding programme. It is seen that the distribution of eggs per year ranged from 2035 in Mandavalli Block to 13,500 in Narsapur Block. The average number of eggs distributed per year in Buttayagudem, Suryapet and Mandavalli were 5,760, 5,739 and 3,867 respectively. If this total distribution of eggs per year is compared to the required number for the programme, it will be evident that the eggs fell short of the total requirements of the feeding programme. The 35 children and 15 pregnant and nursing mothers fed under the feeding programme in a village would require at least 65 eggs per day. The maximum number of eggs distributed which was in Narsapur Block would have sufficed for distribution for 20 days in a year. The impact, therefore, in improving the nutrition of the selected beneficiaries through the supply of eggs becomes evident inasmuch as it did not succeed in touching even the fringe of the problem.

19. Coming to the operational efficiency of the Blocks, it has already been pointed out that in 2 Blocks, the poultry units were wound up, obviously because they failed. In the remaining 3 Blocks also, the production of eggs compared to the initial stock of 200 layers was anything but satisfactory. In view of the defective maintenance of records at the Block level, it has not been possible to calculate even the average production of eggs per layer per year. Even so, looking at the total number of eggs produced, it is seen that the production which ranged between 5,243 the lowest in Mandavalli to 13,500 the highest in Narsapur Block is an unsatisfactory achievement. The 200 layers should have produced atleast 30,000 eggs per year. The annual production of eggs in Suryapet, Manthani and Buttayagudem was 10,622, 8,874 and 5,760 respectively.

20. Another important function of the Block poultry units is the training of poultry keepers in the area. From the information collected, it is seen that Manthani Block poultry unit trained 2 individuals while in Suryapet 14 members from the Mahila Mandals, Surpanches etc., were trained.

21. To sum up, the achievement of all the Block poultry units during the 5 years was the production of 1.52 lakh eggs during the entire period and the total expenditure incurred on the programme was Rs. 1.45 lakhs, obviously an unsatisfactory situation. The value of the eggs produced during the entire programme period is just about equal to the expenditure in one Block. The number of eggs distributed during the entire period in all the Blocks is about 1.06 lakhs adequate to cover 40 days supply in the villages taken up under the programme. The efficacy of the programme can well be imagined from the fact that the supply was adequate only for 40 days in the entire 5 year period.

Village Poultry Units:

22. Applied Nutrition Programme contemplates that 4 poultry units each of 30 layers of cross-breds will be established in Mahila Mandals and Youth Clubs in each Selected Block. It was expected that each of these units will produce about 4,500 eggs per year. The average poultry unit is expected to supply 1/3rd of the eggs so produced as a contribution to approved feeding programme. It is free to dispose of the balance of the eggs. In addition, 2 private individuals were expected to be encouraged to set-up poultry units, with the supply of 22 cross-bred chicks of 3 months old free of cost provided they agree to construct a poultry house of standard type. Balanced poultry feed will be supplied from the Regional Poultry Farms on a no-profit no-loss basis. Some of the eggs required for the approved feeding schemes were to be purchased from the private poultry keepers at prices to be fixed by the Department, the Block staff giving necessary advice and veterinary help to the private poultry keepers whenever

necessary. In none of the Blocks selected for the study, excepting Manthani Block, poultry units were established. Even in Manthani where 3 poultry units were reported to have been established, they were not established and managed either by the Mahila Mandals or by Yuvak Mandals or by any private individuals. The Block Authorities have started village poultry units in 3 villages and placed these units under the care of the village school teacher. Information relating to the actual production of eggs, distribution of eggs etc., were not forthcoming. In all these 3 villages, the poultry units were no longer in existence during the period of study.

23. The findings in respect of the functioning of the poultry programme under the Applied Nutrition Programme therefore are:

- (a) While Block poultry units are expected to be organised in each selected Block, it was not at all organised in Thamballa-palli Block;
- (b) Even in the remaining 5 Blocks where they were started, they were started at different periods of time during the operational period and some of these Block poultry units were no longer in existence after being in operation for a couple of years;
- (c) The operational efficiency of these units was below standard inasmuch as the average annual production of eggs compared to the foundation stock of 200 layers was deplorably low;
- (d) The contribution of the Block poultry units to the educational feeding programme was insignificant as it did not meet even partly the requirements of the approved feeding programme;
- (e) The Block poultry units did not appear to have succeeded in imparting training to the local people for starting poultries;
- (f) The main objective of promoting poultry keeping and augmenting supply of eggs in supplementing protective foods has not been achieved even partly;
- (g) None of the Blocks succeeded in establishing village poultry units either by the voluntary organisations, local Mahila Mandals or Yuvak Mandals or by private poultry keepers; and
- (h) In Manthani Block, the 3 village poultry units were established by the Block Agency itself and even these units have ceased to exist during the period of study.

24. The poultry programme was a total failure and none of the objectives, basic or secondary, have been achieved. The money spent, efforts taken etc., were therefore in vain.

Fisheries Programme :

25. Under the Applied Nutrition Programme, the State Government was expected to promote a scheme for improving inland fish culture in the centres in which suitable perennial waters exist and which can adequately be utilised. Among the centres selected for development of inland fisheries is Manthani Block of Karimnagar district which is one of the Blocks selected for the study. Two tanks by name Peddacheruvu of Parupalli and Pattalacheruvu of Pattalapalli, 8 miles from the Block Headquarters of Manthani, were selected as they were considered to be the best available in the Block for intensification of production. The other blocks were not included with plan of operation. But instead of the selected two, 3 tanks were selected for the programme in Manthani. There was one more tank in the same village of Parupalli and another tank in the Manthani Headquarters. The Pattalacheruvu indicated in the plan of operation was not taken up. Thus instead of 2, 3 tanks were taken up and one of the selected tanks was also dropped. Though no mention appears to have been made in the plan of operation for any specified programme of fish production, in Narsapur Block also 3 villages viz., Narsapur, Donte, Malparty were chosen for intensification of fisheries production. In the Manthani Block, fish valued at Rs. 6,431 was contributed to the approved feeding programme. In Narsapur Block the value of fish contributed for approved feeding programme was Rs. 3,504. From the details furnished by the Samithis, it was seen that while an amount of about Rs. 2,800 was spent in Narsapur Samithi towards the value of fingerlings and other expenses, the value of fish and receipts from the lease of tanks amounted to Rs. 10,400, thus, bringing satisfactory return for the fingerlings stocked. In Manthani, however, while fingerlings valued at about Rs. 6,200 was stocked, the value of fish realised was only Rs. 6,400. Obviously, the stocking programme for intensification of fisheries production was a failure in Manthani Block as compared to Narsapur Block. In Narsapur, the distribution of fish was reported to have ranged between 3 to 10 kgs., while it was 6-8 kgs., in Manthani Block. On the whole, the fisheries programme did not receive very great importance in all the Blocks selected since it was a selective programme which could be implemented only in suitable areas. In the remaining 4 Blocks therefore, there was no attempt at the development of inland fisheries and consequently no attempt made for distribution of fish in the educational feeding programme. Even in respect of development of inland fisheries where opportunities existed in the 2 Blocks of Manthani and Narsapur, there was no concerted effort to maximise production. While Manthani Block appears to have exploited fish departmentally, by appointing fishermen, Narsapur Block appears to have followed different methods during different periods depending upon the circumstances. In a few years, the tanks were leased out and in other years they were exploited by the Departmental staff. In short, even in this area, the achievement was anything but creditable.

Nutrition Education:

26. One of the principal objectives of the Applied Nutrition Programme is to encourage an increased consumption of protective foods so that the present high proportion of starchy foods in the average diet may be reduced, which involves trying to modify or change existing food habits. With a view to promote nutritional education, feeding schemes for pre-school children and school children and demonstration meals for expectant and nursing mothers and members of Mahila Mandals were contemplated under the programme. The educational value of these meals was expected to be fully realised if they include as many as possible of the following elements *viz.*, cereals, pulses, leafy vegetables, yellow or red vegetables and for non-vegetarians, an egg or some fish. Fruit or milk was also to be included with the meal. The arrangement was that the pre-school children of the Balwadi, belonging to the age group of 0-6 along with selected nursing and pregnant mothers would be served with this type of nutritious food to promote nutrition education. In addition to providing these vulnerable sections of the community with a balanced food, demonstration of preparation of nutritious food was also contemplated under the programme. The voluntary organisations like Mahila Mandals are expected to play an active role in the demonstration meals and the supplementary feeding programmes undertaken. It is also expected that in order that meals served to pre-school and school children may have the maximum education effect on the community as a whole, steps should be taken to encourage the parents to take an interest in, and where it can be arranged to assist in organising, preparing and serving the meals. The extent of emphasis placed on the involvement of the local population in the entire programme so that the education value might be enhanced, may therefore be seen. However, in the field it turned out to be a mechanical feeding programme. What has happened in the field was the organisation of a Balwadi, appointment of a Balwadi teacher and a Gram Laxmi, utilising 8 kgs., of rawa and 700 grams of salad oil for preparing upma and distributing it to the beneficiaries who numbered 100. Occasionally, a couple of eggs to the adult and an egg to the children was supplied. In isolated cases, where fisheries programme has been taken, a bit or two of fish was distributed. Likewise, whenever vegetables were available, they were mixed up in the upma and cooked and served. But there was a certain amount of regularity in the care meal supplied to these centres being cooked and served in all the selected villages. While it might have gone to relieve the pangs of hunger of a few selected beneficiaries, to say that nutrition education was spread or even initiated is to make a tall claim under the Applied Nutrition Programme. There were very few cooking demonstrations. They were seldom held and if held, they were few and far between. It would be more true to hold that they were not held for there was no record of such demonstrations, the types of demonstrations held, the number and category of participants, etc. The participation of the parents in the programme did not also fructify.

27. It was inconceivable that any trained personnel could be hired for a monthly salary of Rs. 50 to man a Balwadi. This is probably not even a week's daily wages paid to an agricultural labourer. To expect a trained teacher to work at this ridiculously low salary is unimaginative, and if they did manage to have one on Rs. 50 the results are obvious. Moreover the Gramlaxmi, a supposedly honorary worker is paid only Rs. 25. She cooks the food and assists in its distribution to the beneficiaries, collects the children of the Balwadi, takes care of the Balwadi. In fact, she is a multipurpose worker and her job is a whole time one. To expect an honorary functionary to do all this is to say the least an unrealistic approach. While there were vague complaints that the CARE meal was misused it was very difficult to prove the allegation. However, in one village, a Balwadi teacher who knew about the visit of a State level officer had the audacity to tell him that all the beneficiaries were fed and sent away. Her records indicated very religiously, the utilisation of 8 kgs., of Balahar and 700 grams of salad oil. The visting officer demanded the production of utensils used for cooking. He was surprised to find the existence of a 3 kgs., vessel in which 8 kgs., of food was reported to have been cooked. If this could happen in a Balwadi whose teacher knew about the State level officers visit and who had arrived at the appointed time of feeding, it gives room to believe the allegation of misuse made. But this singular instance of misconduct on the part of one cannot be generalised. The feeding programme in the village of Gopdinne in Thamballapalli Block of Chittoor district is a classic example of what a bad location could be where this incident was detected. The Balwadi is located on the road side, a mile and half from the village. This Balwadi is situated by the side of another upper primary school where also the mid-day meals programme is being undertaken. Children of 0-6 years and expectant mothers and nursing mothers could hardly be expected to walk down in the mid-sun one and half miles to receive a handful of upma. In fact, they could have been hardly induced to walk all the distance, particularly young children of 0-6 age group. The Block Agency appears to have been so unimaginative to have located the Balwadi at this place.

28. Curiously enough, none of the procedures prescribed appear to have been followed. Here and there, Medical Officers did admit having selected the beneficiaries in the initial stages. In areas where mal-nutrition is wide spread, the Doctor has nothing to choose between one person and another for every one that was selected was medically entitled to the benefits and therefore, the role of the Doctor was not really crucial in the initial selection. What was lacking is the periodical check up to watch the progress of the selected beneficiaries to find out the extent to which the nutritious food has improved the general condition. The periodical check up as contemplated in the programme was wholly absent. They seem to have completely ignored their role in the programme after the initial selection for the rest of the period.

If, as envisaged under the programme, nutritious food like eggs, vegetables, fish had gone into the feeding programme, there could have been some improvement for the doctors to watch and find. Since these were absent the need to periodically check them was also not obviously there. The operation of the programme is characterised by the functionaries not performing their duties, the perquisites not being supplied, co-ordination being totally absent and supervision entirely forgotten. The extent of inaction on the part of the administration at all levels which were responsible will be indicated in the section where the role of the various administrative agencies in the implementation of the programme will be discussed at length.

29. Originally under the programme 35 pre-school children and 15 nursing and pregnant mothers were to be fed. But when the supply of CARE meal became larger, the number of persons fed was increased to 100, the distribution of nutritious food like vegetables, egg and fish being restricted to the originally selected 50 beneficiaries comprising 35 school children and 15 pregnant and nursing mothers.

30. In the previous paragraphs where the programmes relating to horticulture, poultry and fisheries were discussed, it was established that the production was anything but satisfactory and therefore, the distribution was only sporadic. This feeding programme which was therefore expected to serve as some sort of nutrition education tended to be a mere feeding programme with the CARE meal supplied and achieved nothing else.

31. During the study it was also found that some beneficiaries continued indefinitely and there were instances where children over 6 years were also included in the programme.

Expenditure:

32. Each Block selected for implementation of the Applied Nutrition Programme is expected to receive financial assistance at the rate of Rs. 85,000 per year. Till the end of 1974-75 all the Blocks excepting Mandavalli selected for the study have completed the prescribed period of operation of 5 years. During the period of operation of the Block all the 6 Blocks according to their entitlement were expected to receive a total amount of Rs. 24.65 lakhs. From the particulars furnished, none of the Blocks selected for the study, in none of the years of the programme period, received the full amount of Rs. 85,000. The annual releases to various Blocks varied from Block to Block and from year to year depending perhaps on the resources available, as well as the needs of each Block judged by the progress it has made during the previous years. An attempt was made to collect the amounts released to the various Blocks during the period of operation of the Block. It is seen that the total amount received by the Blocks amounted to a sum of Rs. 11.69 lakhs. Against this

amount, the amount actually spent was Rs. 6.00 lakhs. It will, therefore, be seen that the amount actually utilised was a fourth of the amount to which the Blocks were actually entitled during the period of operation of the programme. Even against the actual releases made to the various Blocks, the expenditure incurred was just about half the amount received from the Government towards expenditure on this programme. The poor performance under the various programmes taken up is obviously reflected in the poor expenditure figures also. The safe conclusion would be that if the programme had not succeeded, it was not due to lack of finance but due to the organisational deficiencies and inadequate supervision for effective implementation of the programme. While the programme period has been completed in 5 out of the 6 Blocks and while by their own admission, they had still with them the unutilised amounts amounting to about Rs. 6.00 lakhs, these were not surrendered to the Government excepting in one Block. From the information gathered, it was seen that the amounts lying with the Blocks from the amounts released to them for utilisation of the programme amounted to as much as Rs. 4.59 lakhs.

33. The following statement gives the amounts released and the expenditure incurred in each of the Blocks during every year. It is seen that the percentage of expenditure to the amounts released during the entire programme period ranged between 10.9, the lowest in Thamballapalli to 100 the highest in Suryapet.

**STATEMENT SHOWING THE ANNUAL RECEIPTS AND
EXPENDITURE IN SELECTED BLOCKS UNDER APPLIED
NUTRITION PROGRAMME DURING OPERATIONAL
PERIOD.**

| <i>Name of the Block.</i> | <i>Year</i> | <i>Amount program- med to be allotted</i> | <i>Amount actually released.</i> | <i>Expendi- ture dur- ing the year</i> | <i>% of ex- penditure to the amount released</i> |
|---------------------------|-------------|---|--|--|--|
| | | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| 1. Narsapur | 1971-72 | 85,000 | 3,400 | 240 | 7.05 |
| | 1971-72 | 85,000 | 46,360 | 21,697 | 46.80 |
| | 1972-73 | 85,000 | 38,960 | 21,521 | 46.42 |
| | 1973-74 | 85,000 | 34,000 | 49,131 | 144.50 |
| | 1974-75 | 85,000 | 80,000 | 19,923 | 24.90 |
| Total | | 4,25,000 | 2,02,720 | 1,12,512 | 55.50 |

| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 2. Manthani | .. 1967-68 | 85,000 | 15,016 | 5,443 | 36.24 |
| | 1968-69 | 85,000 | 20,000 | 26,918 | 134.59 |
| | 1969-70 | 85,000 | 34,000 | 18,665 | 54.90 |
| | 1970-71 | 85,000 | 36,816 | 28,001 | 76.05 |
| | 1971-72 | 85,000 | 51,000 | 31,303 | 61.37 |
| Total | .. | 4,25,000 | 1,56,832 | 1,10,330 | 70.3 |
| 3. Suryapet | .. 1968-69 | 85,000 | 36,807 | 36,807 | 100.0 |
| | 1969-70 | 85,000 | 12,896 | 12,896 | 100.0 |
| | 1970-71 | 85,000 | 40,600 | 40,600 | 100.0 |
| | 1971-72 | 85,000 | 44,162 | 44,162 | 100.0 |
| | 1972-73 | 85,000 | 61,604 | 61,604 | 100.0 |
| Total | .. | 4,25,000 | 1,96,069 | 1,96,069 | 100.0 |
| 4. Mandavalli | .. 1971-72 | 85,000 | 45,390 | 5,620 | 12.38 |
| | 1972-73 | 85,000 | 56,390 | 24,954 | 44.25 |
| | 1973-74 | 85,000 | 35,334 | 10,311 | 29.18 |
| | 1974-75 | 85,000 | 50,000 | N.A. | .. |
| Total | .. | 3,40,000 | 1,87,114 | 40,885 | 21.9 |
| 5. Thamballapalli | .. 1970-71 | 85,000 | 34,000 | 30 | 0.88 |
| | 1971-72 | 85,000 | 45,160 | 3,406 | 7.54 |
| | 1972-73 | 85,000 | 50,960 | 6,176 | 12.11 |
| | 1973-74 | 85,000 | 34,000 | 9,799 | 28.82 |
| | 1974-75 | 85,000 | 80,000 | 7,223 | 9.02 |
| Total | .. | 4,25,000 | 2,44,120 | 26,634 | 10.9 |
| 6. Buttayagudem | .. 1970-71 | 85,000 | 34,000 | .. | 0.0 |
| | 1971-72 | 85,000 | 41,525 | 38,810 | 93.46 |
| | 1972-73 | 85,000 | 57,540 | 29,385 | 51.06 |
| | 1973-74 | 85,000 | 49,485 | 45,496 | 91.93 |
| | 1974-75 | 85,000 | N.A. | N.A. | .. |
| Total | .. | 4,25,000 | 1,82,550 | 1,13,691 | 62.3 |
| Grand Total of all 6 Blocks | .. | 24,65,000 | 11,69,405 | 6,00,121 | 51.32 |

Maintenance of records and registers:

34. The basic features of the Applied Nutrition Programme, as required to be implemented in the various Blocks, would necessitate maintenance of records and registers broadly in respect of the following:

- (i) Particulars of cost incurred and the quantity of vegetables/ fruits grown in the school as well as samithi level gardens;
- (ii) Particulars of expenditure incurred, number of eggs produced, number of eggs distributed beneficiary-wise etc., in respect of the poultry programme;
- (iii) Details of fisheries programme including the cost of inputs, the value of fish realised, the distribution of fish, etc;
- (iv) Particulars relating to the beneficiaries fed under the educational feeding programme daily;
- (v) Maintenance of health records of the various beneficiaries; and
- (vi) Particulars for assessing local participation, etc.

35. In general, it might be held that there was not a single record which could be claimed to have been maintained upto-date in respect of any of the activities under the Applied Nutrition Programme. No records were kept in respect of most of the activities, in respect of few activities where registers were kept, they were not regular and upto-date, in respect of some records maintained regularly they were defective. As mentioned in the earlier sections, it was an impossible task to assess the performance of the school gardens and say whether they have reached a self-supporting stage in the absence of records in respect of school gardens. There was, in effect, some sort of adhocism in the maintenance of records and there was no similarity either in the type of records maintained or the particulars recorded at the village and the Block levels. The result was none of the Blocks was able to furnish any information in regard to any of the activities of the programme in a correct manner. Another difficulty, added to this situation, was the change of personnel in the Blocks. During the period of study, the situation was that the existing personnel were not aware of the details of the programme as they were implemented and therefore could not furnish any information. They could not lay their hands on the records maintained. Even the expenditure particulars which were normally expected to be maintained correctly since they are subject to audit and other financial requirements were not maintained properly. The result was contrary information and sometimes very unreliable information. For instance, while Mandavalli did not implement fisheries programme the expenditure particulars furnished showed some expenditure under fisheries programme. The totals of

the expenditure incurred under various items did not add up to the total expenditure figures furnished. In one case, the expenditure was equivalent, paise to paise, to the releases made. Probably, the Samithi furnished the expenditure figures both under expenditure as well as releases made to the Blocks.

36. An attempt was also made, in the process of collecting information, to refer to the quarterly progress sent to the Bureau of Economics and Statistics under the Applied Nutrition Programme. The figures furnished there too were anything but satisfactory. A look, at random, at the copies of the progress reports revealed a number of discrepancies. For instance, in Manthani Block, the number of villages where the programme was taken up was reported to be 7 whereas it was implemented only in 5 villages. In one of the quarterly progress reports, cumulative achievements under the programme were reported to be nil right through. Even the Block quarterly progress reports appear to have been filled in and submitted to the State Director of Economics and Statistics in a very indifferent manner. There seems to have been a lot of mis-understanding about the concepts of the various terms and therefore, the information furnished could not be correct. During the course of the study, it was reported that periodical progress reports were being obtained by the P. R. Department also. But there were a large number of defaulters and therefore no useful purpose was served by them. They were simply collected, as many as they were received, and filed. This has only added to the paper work of the Department without commensurate results.

37. In respect of school garden programme, a basic register at the school level showing the types of vegetables grown, the quantities grown, the quantities harvested, the quantities distributed to the beneficiaries or the manner of disposal of surpluses was not at all there. Even in respect of the information contained in a few places, they were far from satisfactory. The result was that it was not possible to assess with any precision even the quantity of vegetables grown, much less, actually distributed under the school garden programme. An indication of either the involvement of the school children or the local leaders for maintaining and running the school garden programme was totally absent from the records maintained at the school level.

38. Earlier it was recorded that all the Blocks excepting Thamballapalli established a Block poultry unit. An attempt was, therefore made to study the working of all these Block poultry units with reference to the objectives of these units. Even here, the procedure prescribed appears to have been not followed in the maintenance of day-to-day records relating to the unit. It would have been easier if records relating to the value and quantity of poultry feed received, the number of birds maintained day-to-day, the number of egg collected, the number distributed to the beneficiaries, the periodicity of distribution and the manner of disposal of surpluses,

if any, had been systematically maintained which would have helped in assessing the working of these units and locating deficiencies and suggesting remedial measures. The result was, even the number of eggs laid per layer could not be calculated. The total cost incurred on these units was also not available. All that could be obtained was that the Block unit was started at a particular period and closed down at a later date. The mortalities that are normal in any poultry unit were not regularly and faithfully recorded with the result that the operational efficiency of the Block poultry unit could not be assessed properly. Since these were wound up, subsequently, the inevitable conclusion was that these Block poultry units failed in their purpose. Why they failed and what were their achievements could not be properly assessed for want of details that are essential in any study on the working of the poultry programme. The registers maintained were casual and inspections of these registers also appears to be casual by the Inspecting Officers. No sustained effort appears to have been taken to impress upon the implementing Agencies about the need for maintenance of registers and records which would enable adequate control over the maintenance of the Institutions, as well as provide enough data to find out the short-comings, if any.

39. Since the fisheries programme was not operated in all the Blocks excepting two, their records related only to these Blocks. Even in respect of this programme, adequate information was not available. They were not able to say the value of the fish or the actual quantity distributed, the days when they were distributed, the places to which these were sent etc. Here again, it is the same story repeated. The result was that even the value and the quantity of fish distributed were not available.

40. In regard to the educational feeding programme, presumably due to the requirements of U.N.I.C.E.F. which insisted on some sort of periodical reports, some basic documents were maintained at the village level and they were the stock register and the daily attendance register. While both appear to have been religiously maintained, their maintenance was routine. They appear to have fulfilled the formality by occasionally taking up all the attendance registers and marking attendance of the beneficiaries. It was seen that all the beneficiaries were marked present all the days without a single absentee on any single day. It would be inconceivable to expect all the 100 selected beneficiaries to be present at the feeding programme without absence, even for a single day right through the programme period. In the stock register a routine entry of 700 grams of salad oil and 8 kgs. of rawa as used, was found. In an instance, the stock register showed that feeding programme was stopped because the Care meal was exhausted but in the attendance register all the beneficiaries were marked present. To crown it all, these registers, with all these discrepancies have the signatures of Village Development Officers. No effort appears to have been taken to go into the veracity of the entries and to guide the persons properly. An attempt was also made to

verify the stocks of Rawa and oil with the Balwadis with the entries made in the register and no significant variations were found. The variations, if any, were marginal. It is probable that on some days, the actual quantities noted are not actually cooked and served but there seems to be no check made in this regard. In the absence of these, it has to be recorded that all the beneficiaries were fed all through. These feeding registers did not even contain whether the Care meal was supplemented by eggs or fish or vegetables and if so, the source of supply. In other words, at the village, it was reported that occasionally vegetables, eggs and fish were distributed but these were not recorded in the register. The registers should have provided for noting the days on which eggs were distributed, the days on which the vegetables were mixed and supplied and the days on which fish was supplied. In the absence of any basic record relating to the distribution of eggs, fish etc., one had to rely only on the reported figures of vegetables distributed, eggs, distributed etc., from the sources of distribution and not at the beneficiaries level.

41. There was practically no record at the village level maintained for assessing the local participation. Cooking demonstrations were reported to have been held but not recorded any where. The number and type of demonstrations, the duration, the number of participants in the demonstrations, the number of beneficiaries etc. were not recorded at all in any type of registers. The activities of Mahila Mandals, their participation in the Applied Nutrition Programme could not be seen from any of the registers because none were maintained. In the absence of these, the extent of the involvement of Mahila Mandals or Youth Organisations or village leaders in the Applied Nutrition Programme was difficult to assess.

42. It can, therefore, be safely held that the maintenance of records and registers to reflect the various activities undertaken in each village under the Applied Nutrition Programme was anything but satisfactory. There appears to have been no instructions for the strict maintenance of these though they were prescribed and none followed it up by ensuring that the records prescribed under the programme were maintained properly. Thus, lack of adequate records and registers with up-to-date information was a great problem in assessing the progress of the Applied Nutrition Programme. In other words, the statistical support for the various findings in a study like this became difficult.

Training Programmes:

43. With the introduction of Applied Nutrition Programmes the State Government drew up a training programme to impart the necessary functional knowledge and skills required by the field officers and non-officials for the efficient implementation of the programme. Two Gramasevak Training Centres at Rejendranagar and Samalkot

and the State Institute of Community Development were chosen for imparting this training to the selected personnel. While the Gramsevak Training Centres imparted training to the functionaries at lower levels like Village Level Workers, members of Mahila Mandals, Mid-wives, Balwadi Teachers etc., the State Institute of Community Development provided training facilities to the middle level personnel like the District Officers, the Block Development Officers, the Extension Officers, the Panchayat Samithi Presidents and other non-officials of the hierarchy. The training was begun in the year 1967-68 and continued till 1973-74. Gramsevak Training Centres imparted training, for a period of 5 days to Sarpanches, for a period of 1-2 weeks to Village Level Workers, for a period of 12 days to the members of Mahila Mandals and Youth Organisations, for a period of 15 days to Gramsevaks and Mid-wives and for a period of 30 days for Balwadi teachers. The duration of the training programme at the State Institute of Community Development was only for a period of one week. From the information furnished, it is observed that the training programme by the Gramsevak Training Centres was not implemented for a period of two years between 1968-70, while the training programme was continued right through in the State Institute of Community Development. The total number of persons trained by the two Gramsevak Training Centres were 1331 comprising 326 Village Level Workers, 62 Extension Officers, 62 Gramsevikas, 51 Mukhya-sevikas 313 Balsevikas 78 Mid-wives 168 Sarpanches and 271 Mahila Mandal members. The total number of persons trained by the State Institute of Community Development between 1967-74 was 348 comprising 46 District Officers, 71 Block Development Officers, 174 Extension Officers and 57 non-officials. In the State Institute of Community Development, though the duration of the programme was limited, the course has been planned with the main objective of equipping the trainees with the required skills to make them better functionaries at the field level. The State Institute of Community Development has planned its training programme carefully with lectures and lecture-cum-discussions with learned persons drawn from U. N. I. C. E. F. Nutrition Research Laboratories, Andhra Pradesh Agricultural University, Osmania Medical College, National Institute of Community Development and State Government Senior Officers functioning in the various Development Departments like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Medical and Public Health, Fisheries, Education etc. The State Institute has also organised field studies and visits to Institutions like Nutrition Research Laboratories. The trainees were also taken to a Block where Applied Nutrition Programme was implemented. By and large, the functionaries were provided facilities to learn the principles of the programme and the directions in which they have to be operated. The only thing is that the trained personnel were shifted due to administrative exigencies and their training some time was not available for utilisation in the field work. Sometimes, it happened that the trained officers got posted where the Applied Nutrition Programme was not implemented. Likewise, untrained personnel

happen to land in Blocks where Applied Nutrition Programme was being implemented. Since the training programme was expected to be continued, it was expected that all the personnel would be trained so that irrespective of shifts, there will always be trained personnel. On the whole, it is observed that in the area of training, the State Government provided the basic training necessary to the functionaries for the programme. Knowing the complexity of the administrative needs, it cannot be held as a major failure because it becomes a little difficult, occasionally, to ensure that such transfers are restricted between trained officers and between the areas implementing this programme.

Administrative Arrangements:

44. The Applied Nutrition Programme was administered directly by the Panchayat Raj Department. The Secretary to Government in the Panchayat Raj Department was assisted by a Project Officer and initially, a team of subject specialists drawn from the Departments of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Women Welfare. Subsequently, the services of the subject matter specialists were dispensed with and the programme was administered by the Project Officer with a Director of Women's Programme. Later on, another Officer from the Directorate of Women Welfare was brought in and ultimately the State set up was a Project Officer with two lady officers functioning under the supervision of a Director of Nutrition Programme who was also the Deputy Secretary to Government and the Secretary to Government in the Panchayat Raj Department. The formulation of budget proposals, the releases, supervision and inspection were all exercised by the Project Officer and his two lady colleagues under the overall control of the Director and the Secretary to Government.

45. To facilitate co-ordination and guidance of the programme, it was proposed to have a State Co-ordination Committee at the State level. Likewise, Co-ordination Committees at the District and Block levels were also contemplated. The State level Co-ordination Committee was headed by the Secretary to Government in the Panchayat Raj Department, the District Co-ordination Committee was headed by the District Collector and the Block level Co-ordination Committee by the President of the Panchayat Samithi. It was rightly envisaged at the beginning of the programme that there must be, at all levels, an effective committee to co-ordinate the activities of the different functionaries since the programme depended for its success on the co-ordinated effort of different Departments like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Social Education etc. Orders were also issued for constitution of these committees at the Block, District and State level. But the functioning of these committees left much to be desired. There was practically no evidence of the Block level committees functioning periodically as envisaged in the programme. Likewise, the Co-ordination Committee at the District level was only on paper. In

some places, for some period, some time was devoted for discussion of the Applied Nutrition Programme at the Zilla Parishad meetings by including this subject in the agenda but even this practice was not continued for long. In effect, there was no effective functioning of the proposed committees at the Block or District levels. Even the State Level Committee which was expected to be a high power Committee to provide the necessary direction for the entire programme did not meet as often as it was desirable to review, guide and supervise the programme. It was reported by the Employment and Social Welfare Department that the State Level Committee held only two meetings during the entire period. The inescapable conclusion therefore, is that these Committees did not fulfil the purpose for which they were constituted. The result was that it was a departmental programme administered by the Project Officer and his colleagues under the supervision and guidance of the Director and the Secretary to Government. In other words, the entire responsibilities rested with these functionaries.

46. The distance between the supervising agency and the implementing agency was too great since there was no intermediary between the Government which was administering the programme and the actual field level implementing agency. In practice, it happened that the Project Officer was not able to effectively co-ordinate the activities of the Departmental Officers like Extension Officer, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry etc., who owed their allegiance only to their District Officers and their Heads of Departments. A programme of this importance and of this complex nature, if it had been entrusted to a Head of Department who was made responsible for the actual operation of the programme, the guidance and supervision being retained at the Government level, it might have proved a little more effective. A careful analysis of the programme content would reveal that it was a programme where the women played a crucial role. In promoting nutritional education, in improving dietary habits, it was the women through whom the entire nutrition education was sought to be disseminated. The beneficiaries were children in the age group of 0-6 and women who are either nursing mothers or pregnant. It was, therefore, a programme designed mainly for the welfare of women and children through whom the nutrition education was sought to be spread with the ultimate objective of raising the nutritional standards.

47. There is in the State Administrative set up a Director in-charge of Women and Child Welfare and it was noticed that this Head of the Department who is charged with the overall responsibilities of the welfare among the women and children was some how not involved or sufficiently involved in the implementation of the programme. At the District level, it was the District Women Welfare Officer, at the Block level, it was the Mukhyasevika and at the village level it was the village Development Officer (Women) who appear to have been more active in the programme. In fact, it was the village Development Officer (Women) who was in-charge of the responsibilities of

collecting eggs, distributing them to the beneficiaries, supervising the feeding programme and directing the Balwadis etc. All along the line, it was found that the Departmental personnel of the Directorate of Women Welfare played a crucial role. It was, therefore, not understandable how the Director of Women Welfare was completely kept out of the picture. In the interest of the programme, it is, therefore, suggested that atleast in future the Director of Women Welfare should be entrusted directly the responsibilities of the Applied Nutrition Programme.

48. The supervision and inspection of the State level officers viz., the Project Officer and the Directors of Women's programme, who appear to have been in position only for a few years of the programme and whose services were dispensed with later, was anything but effective. Their coverage was not satisfactory and their guidance inadequate. The officers who went for inspections made some suggestions in their inspection reports which do not appear to have been followed up so as to take adequate remedial measures.

49. The most important functionary who could have made this programme succeed was the District Collector. At his level, the necessary guidance and supervision could have been available to the District Officers and the District Collector had the necessary status and authority to get things done. Had these District Collectors been persuaded to take a more abiding interest, the programme would have been by far a greater success than it had turned out to be. The District Collector who had his hands full with multifarious tasks and responsibilities could not have been expected to keep a constant watch over this programme unless some functionary constantly sought his assistance and support for the programme. This unfortunately was not done because there was no officer specifically designated at the District level who was incharge of the programme. The Zilla Parishad assumed some responsibilities and how ineffective it has been was revealed in the earlier sections of this study. Had the District Women Welfare Officer at the District level, been made responsible for the Applied Nutrition Programme, she could have secured the co-ordination of the other functionaries through the authority of the District Collector. It is, therefore, recommended that the Employment and Social Welfare Department give this recommendation, to entrust the administration of the Applied Nutrition Programme to the Directorate of Women Welfare designating the District Women Welfare Officer as the officer responsible at the District level, its serious consideration. All the Committees at the State, District and Block levels should be activated and it should be ensured that these Committees meet as often as laid down without default so that the programme could be effectively supervised. Had these committees met as often as it was envisaged at the beginning of the programme, the weakness in implementation of the programme would have been brought to the notice of the Committees and there could have been

a better appreciation of the tasks involved and application of remedial measures at the appropriate levels. The ineffective functioning of these Committees was by and large responsible for the failure of the programme in securing the objectives with which the programme was implemented in the State.

50. To sum up, the Applied Nutrition Programme was implemented in a half hearted way no one was made directly responsible for the programme and co-ordination was totally lacking at all levels. The State level Committee by not being able to review the programme periodically lost an opportunity in detecting the poor performance of the programme right from the beginning. The District Collector being not fully kept informed, could not bestow his personal attention to this programme. The Block level Committees did not bother about the implementation of the programme excepting deriving satisfaction that their Blocks were selected for this programme and that the selected beneficiaries would get aid through the free mid-day meal. If the programme is to be continued, it has got to be given a fresh look, particularly in the direction of the administrative arrangements that will have to be made to ensure the proper functioning of the entire programme. The administrative arrangements that would be needed are the entrustment of the responsibilities specifically to a particular Department the designation of a District Officer to be solely in-charge of the programme at the District level and securing co-ordination at the 3 levels viz., the Block, District and the State. More than anything else, the programme cannot succeed unless the District Collector takes some interest in the programme and the Government should devise suitable measures to ensure that the District Collector is completely brought into the picture and made responsible. It has to be stressed that the success or failure of this programme would depend upon the extent of involvement and support extended by the District Collectors who alone can make the programme succeed. As long as the District Collector remains only in the periphery of the programme, the programme is not likely to make its impact.

51. It has to be painfully recorded that the Applied Nutrition Programme as it was implemented, left monuments of its failure. The dilapidated Block Poultry Units, the unutilised school gardens, constantly remind one about the failure of the programme and would normally dampen the enthusiasm of any administration to continue the programme. On the other hand, it has to be admitted that the objectives of the Applied Nutrition Programme are quite significant in promoting the nutritional status of the people in the rural areas. The Programme had failed not because of lack of intrinsic merit but because it was not given a fair trial. Even now, it may be worthwhile attempting to revamp the entire procedures to see that the programme is given a fresh trial. But this should assume that the programme is kept constantly under watch for atleast a period of a couple of years with some Department and some Senior Officer, solely

charged with the specific responsibility of guiding, assessing and giving his support for the proper implementation of the programme and with the necessary authority to reorient the programme suitably, according to the local circumstances, so that the benefit of the programme is realised fully. In the context of other State Governments availing the assistance of the UNICEF for implementation of the programme it would really be an extreme step to pronounce the programme a total failure incapable of redemption. While it is and has to be admitted that the programme failed, it should be realised, it failed because of administrative lapses which did not ensure adequate checks, supervision and support to the programme. It is therefore, suggested that a careful decision has to be taken in regard to the continuance or otherwise of the programme on the basis of two factors, and they are:

- (i) the intrinsic value of the Programme; and
- (ii) the reasons for its present failure.

Since it is admitted that the programme has rich potentialities, and since it is hoped that given the necessary administrative support, it is likely to succeed, a fresh attempt at this programme may perhaps, be necessary.

52. In this connection it may be pointed out that the Government of Andhra Pradesh has established a "ready-to-eat" factory for the manufacture of extrusion processed nutritious weaning food with UNICEF assistance. The product of this factory is proposed to be primarily utilised for supplementary feeding programmes, and also marketing it for the benefit of low income consumers. The product of this factory is expected to feed 1.55 lakhs primary school children, with a 105 gram ration of a high protein enriched 'ready-to-eat food' for 215 school days in a year. In case it is decided to continue the Applied Nutrition Programme it should be ensured that there is proper co-ordination between the production of this factory and the requirements of the Applied Nutrition Programme.

53. The food requirements of the Applied Nutrition Programme may be met from the product from this factory. This will also obviate the difficulties now being experienced in the actual preparation of the food in the various centres where the feeding is undertaken. A tying up of the activities of the "ready-to-eat" factory and the Applied Nutrition Programme should be taken up as a pre-requisite for the successful implementation of the Applied Nutrition Programme.

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